EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW & PHOTOS

DOUBLE THE JOY

Twins Sam and Cailli Beckerman – Toronto's original fashion influencers – show off their playful sense of style in a brand new home as they balance work, life and a baby on the way

'We call it our Barbie Dreamhouse!' Sam says of the renovated home she shares with her twin sister, Cailli, and their Pomeranian, Dolly (named after the country singer, of course). Perfect in pink, Sam wears a Barbie Moschino suit by Jeremy Scott, while Cailli gets colourful in a tie-dye slip dress by BruceGlen, a Chanel robe and (far right) studded boots by Moschino.

'I CAN'T WAIT FOR CAILLI TO BE A MOMMY. I FEEL LIKE I'M THE BACKUP MOMMY' *Sam*

When twins Cailli and Sam Beckerman were 10 years old, their mother pulled the plug on the family television set – which may have been the best thing that ever happened to them.

Sitting around the kitchen table in their fabulous new home in Toronto, the women, now 45, reminisce about the decision with their mom, Rana.

"I think she read an article or something," says Sam, laughing. But Mom tells a different story.

"It was dinnertime and you two were in the basement, watching TV or playing Nintendo," explains Rana. "I called you for dinner a few times. You didn't come. And I said, 'That's it!'"

And just like that, the TV and gaming consoles were replaced with journals, scrapbooks and sewing machines.

"We created a whole fashion empire in the basement," says Sam.

While this might be an unusual activity for your average pre-teen, it was a natural evolution for the Beckerman sisters. "Our grand- ▶

‘WE GRAVITATE TOWARD PIECES THAT FEEL MADE WITH INTENTION – HANDMADE, DIY OR CRAFTED – BECAUSE THEY CARRY A SENSE OF LOVE AND INDIVIDUALITY’

Sam

mother was a knitter and had a knitting store with our aunt, our dad was a photographer in the ’70s, and our mom was a model,” says Cailli. “Fashion was always surrounding us and we just fell in love with it, especially the art of creating – I think it keeps us really happy.”

Since childhood, the vivacious and charming duo – whose younger sibling, Chloe, is a textile designer – have chosen the same path in many aspects of life, including their education, career and now living situation, after gutting a house and turning it into their ultimate dream home.

Here, *Hello! Canada* gets the grand tour of the impressive abode and chats with Sam and Cailli – who is seven months along with the baby she’s expecting with her fiancé, Ben Delanghe – about their five-year renovation, playful sense of style and journey from basement fashion designers to prolific fashion influencers.

Thank you for showing us your new home! The renovations must have been a long, stressful process.

Cailli: Well, we bought the house during the pandemic, and we kind of got held up because there was a shortage of wood and lumber. So everything took a long time. Then we needed to find the perfect contractor who could complete the finishings properly because there are a lot of curves and things going on in this house. I think after Year 3 – or maybe it was Year 2 – we decided that, because this is a dream project of ours, we’re going to try not to let our emotions go too crazy. We’re going to really enjoy the process. ▶

The siblings pose in their open-concept kitchen, next to the dining area (left). They credit their contractor, Caliber Group, with making the renovations as painless as possible. Their adventures are documented on Instagram at @beckermantwins.

‘CLOTHES HOLD MEMORIES AND ENERGY, SO WEAR WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL TOTALLY AWESOME’
Sam

Were there any design must-haves on your list?
Sam: I really wanted a gym. That space before was sort of a smoking room, pool room, party room. We put a sauna in there, and we made it like a whole spa in the basement. And the gym is fantastic. Just having that space to work out is great.
Cailli: For me, it was definitely the closet. I really wanted a *Harry Potter*-inspired closet. That area is pretty much where the house peaks, with the highest ceilings. And we were like, “Oh my God. How do we make a closet that’s gonna store stuff across the top? How are we going to create this?” But we figured it out with our architect, Robert Micacchi. We call it the Cabinet of Curiosities.

Both of your closets are a dream for anyone in fashion. Tell us how you got started in the business. We grew up ▶

Home sweet home: A curated collection of art, knick-knacks and furniture (top) echoes the sisters’ bright personalities. Cailli (above) goes casual and comfy, while Sam (left) chills out on ‘the big pouf’ – a gift from designer friend Jeremy Scott. Far left: Their pup gets a cuddle. ‘One of our favourite things is to walk Dolly in her stroller,’ says Sam. ‘We go every day – even in the snow and rain. I just really love that time together.’

'WE LOVE TWINNING, TRADING PIECES AND EXPERIMENTING IN EACH OTHER'S CLOSETS' *Cailli*

in Toronto, and it was always our dream to move to New York and become fashion designers. So we moved there when we were 19. We got into the Fashion Institute of Technology – I studied fashion design and got my BFA in knitwear, Sam got hers in accessory design, and we launched a collection together right out of school. This really cool store from Japan came in and bought everything, and then we went into Holt Renfrew. Then we were designers, showing at New York Fashion Week and Toronto Fashion Week – we sold to over 200 stores. In 2009, when the economy got bad, we decided to close things down. And our visas were also up, so we moved back to Toronto and started blogging.

Sam: We didn't really know what we wanted to do, but we knew we wanted to work together, so we started the blog while we worked at our friend's baby store. Three years later, we went full time. We started getting hired and got noticed by H&M. Then Chanel flew us to Cuba and Dubai for fashion shows.

Chanel is a big deal! What happened was that Karl Lagerfeld saw images of our dog dressed up as him – his name was Karl Lagerwoof! We became part of the Chanel family, and it was a dream come true. Then we went into full-time influencing.

Back then, did the job of influencer even exist? Yeah, people didn't understand. They'd say, "You're just taking pictures of yourselves?" But we had the background. When we had our own clothing line, we would shoot our own look books, we would style ourselves as the models. So we were our own stylists, videographers, photographers. We just kept learning, teaching ourselves.

Cailli: Now it's been 17 years of content creating and we haven't looked back!

Do you ever get tired of putting yourselves out there?

Sam: Not really. I think because we don't show all of our private lives – like, I'm single and I don't show myself out on dates or show the person I'm dating. I don't take pictures of my bedroom, for example. I have boundaries for what I keep private.

Cailli, you are engaged and have a baby boy on the way. Yes! He will be here in April and it's really exciting. I'm 45 and he was kind of a miracle baby. My fiancé, Ben – who splits his time between his place in London [Ont.] and here – and I are just over-the-moon excited. We ▶

Both Cailli and Sam – in matching faux-fur heels from H&M – enjoy plenty of space in their enormous walk-in closets (also left). 'It's a little hard to get up to the top,' admits Cailli, who is one minute older than her sister and currently seven months pregnant. 'So I get Sam or my fiancé to get up on the ladder!'

haven't started [wedding] planning yet – we're doing all the baby stuff first. We're in no rush.

And you decided to find out the gender ahead of time.
Sam: I was the one to give them the news because Cailli and Ben wanted to find out at the same time. So I was like, "Tell the doctor to tell me, I'll buy you a present, and then you can just open it and figure it out together." I got them a cute little onesie with baby blue polar bears all over.

Are you ready for all that chaos? It's a blessing – a total blessing. I'm so excited for him to come already. It feels like we're coming near the finish line.

Cailli: My tummy is so big now. I feel like I'm due now! [*Laughs*]
Sam: Cailli just wanted to have a little baby always, always. I can't wait for her to be a mommy. And I feel like I'm the second mommy or a backup mommy. I know I'm an auntie, but she said the baby could call me Samma. [*Laughs*]

How has your style changed during pregnancy, Cailli? My fashion choices are the same, but everything fits me a whole lot differently at seven months pregnant! So wearing anything stretchy or baggy definitely makes it easier. I've embraced my bump, which has been so much fun, and it's a very freeing and positive experience. Crop tops are now a fave item. I've been loving stretchy lace dresses and highlighting my bump since I'm all tummy. The things I'm avoiding right now while pregnant are small winter jackets – I can't stand it when they won't zip up over my bump!

Sam, what influences your style, day to day? My mood definitely dictates my outfits. I always like to wear something vintage, cartoon pop and rock 'n' roll. Lately, I've been into baggy pants with a fitted corset and heels. Other times, I love over-the-top, funky looks – like a big yellow vintage Moschino spotted SpongeBob [SquarePants] jacket. When I go out for dinner with my friends, I love to rock a vintage slip dress and moto jacket. When I walk my dog, I'm always ▶

These girls love their vintage vibes! Right: Sam, leaning on one of the first colour TVs ever made (also below right) – a treasure that came with the house – reinvents a Levi's jacket, paired with a silver Beckerman heart necklace. Below: It's geek chic for Cailli in Miu Miu glasses and a knit vest. Left: Sam goes for gold in Alexandre Vauthier, and Cailli stuns in a silver dress from Rabanne x H&M. The retro bar is a favourite area and features refurbished stools left behind by the previous owner.

‘I’VE EMBRACED MY BUMP, WHICH HAS BEEN SO MUCH FUN. IT’S A VERY FREEING AND POSITIVE EXPERIENCE’

Cailli

in my pyjamas. So it’s always a feeling, a vibe. Also, I don’t like cold feet, so I always have slippers on.

Now that you’re settled into the house, what are your plans for the year?
Cailli: Aside from Baby…I started writing a book last year. It’s like a middle-grade fantasy book. It’s almost 500 pages and probably going to come out this year. We’re always trying new things to keep challenging ourselves, stimulating ourselves, creating with our minds or hands so we don’t get bored. We are also launching our handmade journal/notebook collection this year on our Amazon shop, Beckerman Twins.
Sam: I’ve wanted to try some acting classes or improv and just see if I enjoy it. I’ve always thought it was such an interesting way to express yourself – it would really take me outside of my box. I put myself out there, but I’m not the person that usually puts up my hand and asks questions in large groups or anything like that – I don’t need that kind of attention.

Sounds like a year of joy ahead. The other day, Cailli said something like, “If I was at the end of my life and I had to look back to a day, it would be today.” I thought that was so special because it was just like a normal day of doing normal things. I thought that was so beautiful – just us being together and hanging out. You really have to remember the good things happening in the world. You look at the news and it’s crazy. It’s just nice to be in a sweet spot when everyone’s doing good and we’re just enjoying life. H

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HAIR: KRISTJAN HAYDEN/CADRE ARTISTS

Standing in their impressive foyer, Sam and Cailli rock matching upcycled Burberry looks. ‘I took a Murakami pillow and sewed it on the vest,’ says Sam. ‘A little #BeckermanDIY! We also made the berets with a Burberry jacket and added vintage pins on them!’